

Town of Somerset
Community Preservation Plan

Revised, June 8, 2017

**Town of Somerset
Community Preservation Plan
Table of Contents**

Table of Contents 2

Overview 3

Community Housing 7

Historic Preservation 10

Open Space 12

Recreation 16

Application Process and Application Forms 19

Appendix I – Glossary 25

Town of Somerset Community Preservation Plan Overview

Introduction

The residents of Somerset voted on November 6, 2012 to accept the Community Preservation Act (“CPA”), Sections 3 to 7 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The CPA establishes a dedicated funding source to enable cities and towns to: (1) acquire, create, and preserve open space, which includes conservation areas and land for the protection of public drinking water supplies; (2) acquire, preserve, rehabilitate, and restore historic resources; (3) acquire, create, preserve, rehabilitate, and restore land for recreational uses, which includes parks, playgrounds, and athletic fields; (4) acquire, create, preserve, and support community housing; and (5) rehabilitate and restore open space and community housing acquired as provided in the CPA. The Town chose a 1% surcharge on the annual property tax assessed on real property commencing in the fiscal year 2014 as a funding source within the Town. The surcharge will be supplemented by annual distributions made by the state from a trust fund established by the CPA.

The CPA requires that at least 10 percent of the CPA funds received in each fiscal year be spent or reserved for each of the CPA's three main purposes: open space and recreation, historic resources, and community housing. CPA funds that are not expended in one year may be “banked” or carried over to subsequent years. However, once CPA funds are banked for a specific purpose, they must ultimately be used for the purpose for which they were banked. The remaining seventy percent of CPA funds in each fiscal year are available to be appropriated or banked, according to the Town's discretion, for one or more of four purposes: the three listed above, as well as for recreational uses. In addition, subject to certain restrictions, up to five percent of the CPA funds raised annually may be used for administrative activities related to the work of the CPC.

In accordance with the CPA, the Town created a Community Preservation Committee (CPC) to study community preservation resources, possibilities and needs to make recommendations to Town Meeting on how to utilize the funds raised through the surcharge and the state match (CPA funds).

The CPC consists of 7 members, including members appointed by and from the Conservation Commission, the Planning Board, the Housing Authority, the Historical Commission, and the Recreation Committee, as well as 2 members appointed by the Board of Selectmen.

The CPC has reviewed existing plans and documents bearing on the four purposes designated for funding under the CPA: open space, recreation, historic resources and community housing.

In reviewing new projects, the CPC:

- Will be a catalyst for projects, not an initiator;
- Will be a funder, not a developer;
- Will utilize community goals previously set forth in other public documents that have received wide scrutiny and public input;

- Will attempt to meet multiple community preservation goals in each project; and
- Will communicate its mission and goals to the general public

Purpose

This Plan is a summary of our work in developing community preservation goals for Somerset. We have attempted to synthesize all planning efforts addressing the four purposes identified in the CPA. We have reviewed Somerset's current resources and have outlined the needs and possibilities for community preservation activities enhancing open space, recreation, historic resources and community housing. We have set out the guidelines we will use to evaluate project proposals as well as the process we will follow during this undertaking.

This Plan sets out the goals and aspirations of the CPC as we begin to implement the CPA. The purposes of this Plan are

- To provide a clear statement of both broad and specific goals that lie behind the CPC's recommendations.

- To layout the specific framework CPC will use in formulating its recommendations, both for the guidance of applicants and the understanding of Town Meeting.

Goals

Somerset has a long-standing history of carefully assessing our Town's needs and goals in light of our shared values. Somerset's Master Plan, the Open Space and Recreational Plan, and the Town's Consolidated Housing Strategy and Plan were created in this spirit. We expect that the CPA will become a resource for carrying out the thoughtful community preservation recommendations contained in these studies.

The subsequent sections of this Plan discuss community goals and projects specific to preservation within each of the four designated purposes of the CPA. In addition to these goals, the CPC has articulated a set of overarching guidelines that apply to all

projects, regardless of the categories under which they fall. The CPC will use these guidelines in its review and decision-making process. They are intended to provide additional guidance to those preparing applications for funding. Not all guidelines will be appropriate for every project.

Decision Guidelines

The Somerset Community Preservation Committee will only consider proposals that are eligible for Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding according to the terms of the CPA legislation; specifically, proposals for:

- The acquisition, preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of historic resources.
- The acquisition, creation, and preservation of open space.
- The acquisition, creation, and preservation of land for recreational use.
- The acquisition, creation, preservation, and support of community housing (including items such as annual payments to the housing authority to preserve or expand the affordable housing supply).
- The rehabilitation and restoration of open space, land for recreational use, and community housing that is acquired or created using monies from the fund.

Preference will be given to proposals which meet as many of the following general criteria as possible:

- Are consistent with current planning documents that have received wide scrutiny and input and have been adopted by the town;
- Save resources that would otherwise be threatened;
- Benefit a currently under-served population;
- Either serve more than one CPA purpose (especially in linking open space, recreation and community housing) or demonstrate why serving multiple needs is not feasible;
- Demonstrate practicality and feasibility, and demonstrate that they can be implemented expeditiously and within budget;
- Produce an advantageous cost/benefit value;
- Leverage additional public and/or private funds;
- Preserve or utilize currently owned town assets; and
- Receive endorsement by other municipal boards or departments.

Process

The Town Administrator, Town boards and departments, civic organizations, and residents may bring proposals for funding to the CPC. In some instances, the CPC may be the catalyst for projects which meet the goals of this plan. The CPC will give

favorable consideration to those proposals which best meet our guidelines and are consistent with Somerset goals in the areas of open space, recreation, historic resources and/or community housing.

The CPC does not have the power to appropriate funds for particular projects, only to make recommendations to Town Meeting. Under the law, the power to appropriate CPA funds is reserved solely for Town Meeting, acting only upon the recommendations of the CPC. For these reasons, we want to provide a strong and consistent rationale for our recommendations.

The CPC seeks a Town-wide and long-term perspective. It expects to recommend projects that will have a significant long-term impact on the Town. We may choose to recommend to Town Meeting that some or all of CPA funds be “banked” or reserved for significant projects and opportunities in the future. We are seeking to create an effective process through which organizations and citizens may gain access to the CPA funds for projects that will enhance our Town.

Please note: Except for projects where the Town or any of its departments is the applicant, a Grant Agreement in a form prepared by and acceptable to the Committee must be signed by the Applicant after the project has been approved at Town Meeting but before funds are disbursed.

Further Information

Copies of this document, as well as links to a wide range of community preservation information, including the **Application for Community Preservation Funding**, are available at the Town Clerk’s office and on the Town's Web site at <http://www.townofsomerset.org/>

This Community Preservation Plan is respectfully submitted to the residents of Somerset in the hope that it will provide a focus and catalyst for significant enhancement of community preservation goals in Somerset.

Adopted by the Community Preservation Committee on June 16, 2015.

Revised by the Community Preservation Committee on June 9, 2016.

Revised by the Community Preservation Committee on June 8, 2017.

Timothy Turner - Conservation Commission designee
James J O'Rourke Jr.- Historical Commission designee, Chairman and Secretary
Antone Soares, Jr. - Housing Authority designee
James Pereira - Recreation Committee designee
Gary Simons – Planning Board designee
Richard M. Brown – at large, appointed by Board of Selectman
Steven Moniz – Parks Commission designee

**Town of Somerset
Community Preservation Plan
Community Housing**

Somerset is a small town in Southeastern Massachusetts, approximately 7 miles long and 1 mile wide, situated along the west side of the Taunton River. It is composed of primarily single family homes, the majority dating from the late 1940s through the 1970s. However, there are neighborhoods that have multi-family units. The multi-family units are primarily found in the older parts of Town such as “The Village”, along Riverside Avenue north of the new Veteran’s Memorial Bridge, Read St. and scattered units in other areas. Generally, these are greater than seventy years old. There has been limited multi-family housing built since the 1950s, as it requires special permit. It is allowed under mixed use, open space, etc.

Somerset has a total of 7,335 year round housing units with 271 units classified as affordable according to the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI). The majority of the affordable units will remain affordable in perpetuity. Four units will expire in 2025. The affordable units are managed by the Somerset Housing Authority, The Corporation for Independent Living, North Farm Senior Estates and the Department of Developmental Services (DDS). Somerset is 3.69% subsidized according to the SHI far short of the 10% required by the State.

In addition, “Vacant land in Somerset has become scarce. There are only about 1,200 acres of undeveloped land remaining in town, and not all of that is easily developable due to various constraints (slope, soils, wetlands, etc.)”. Source: Somerset Conservation, Recreation and Open Space Plan 2004

The limited land resources have a negative implication for the affordable housing options for the future of Somerset’s present population.

Housing Needs

There are 27 Communities in the Southeastern Regional Planning Economic Development District (SRPEDD). Compared with these 27 Communities; Somerset’s SHI ranks 17th in the district. The median age in Somerset is 45.4 years with a median income reported in the 2007-2011 American Community Survey 5-years estimates to be just under \$70,000.

Somerset’s growth as of this writing is stagnant due to the lack of available buildable land for new construction, as well as the overall economic climate in southeastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Somerset has issued 56 total building permits from 2007-2013 compared to 285 from 2000 to 2006.

Somerset is the third (3rd) oldest community in the twenty-three cities and towns in Bristol County with a median age of 45.4. Mattapoisett (47.7) and Marion (46.8) are the only Towns higher in median age.

The demographics for Somerset based on a population of 17,896 by age suggests that within the next ten to twenty years there will be an even larger population shift to a higher median age with little resources for affordable and age-appropriate housing (meaning housing that can accommodate the needs of an older population that may require special accommodations, have difficulty climbing stairs, or otherwise independently maintaining a single-family home).

Population aged 40 years or older based on a total population of 17,896

| | |
|--------|---|
| 10,306 | 57% are age 40 years old or older |
| 5,472 | 53% of the total are between 40 and 59 years of age |
| 4,834 | 47% of the total are 60 years of age or older |

The CPA Statute, M.G.L. Chapter 44B , defines “Community Housing” based on income as follows:

“Low income housing”, housing for those persons and families whose annual income is less than 80 per cent of the areawide median income. The areawide median income shall be the areawide median income as determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

“Low or moderate income senior housing”, housing for those persons having reached the age of 60 or over who would qualify for low or moderate income housing.

“Moderate income housing”, housing for those persons and families whose annual income is less than 100 per cent of the areawide median income. The areawide median income shall be the areawide median income as determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

"Support of Community housing", shall include, but not be limited to, programs that provide grants, loans, rental assistance, security deposits, interest-rate write downs or other forms of assistance directly to individuals and families who are eligible for community housing, or to an entity that owns, operates or manages such housing, for the purpose of making housing affordable.

Considering age and median income as well as buildable available land, Somerset should concentrate its housing efforts toward the development of affordable, age-appropriate housing options, including the construction of additional senior housing, while enabling a turn-over of its current housing stock to a younger demographic.

Housing Goals

Somerset's housing goal is to provide its aging population, and Veterans with Affordable and age-appropriate Housing options that enables life-long residents to remain residents in town, providing continuity of their civic, religious, and other social networks, while also enabling a turn-over of its single-family housing stock to a new generation of families that can revitalize the town.

Housing Projects (Proposed)

- Establish an Affordable Housing Trust in order to support Community Housing
- Build more Affordable Housing to coincide with the age growth rate
- Build or reuse a building for Veteran's Housing that may include on site health care
- Acquire, preserve, rehab and restore Community housing including individual homes through an Affordable Housing Trust
- Develop through reuse a mix of Affordable Housing to include people with special needs or disabilities
- Reuse existing housing stock to Affordable Housing for employees to live and work in Town
- Develop a Town of Somerset Housing Plan to be updated every 5 years.

In summation, housing affordability is one of the most significant challenges facing the Town of Somerset. We need to take measures to prevent our elderly and young families from leaving our communities due to a lack of affordable housing.

Town of Somerset Community Preservation Plan Historic Preservation

Historic Resources are defined by the CPA as buildings, structures, vessels, documents, artifacts or real properties that are listed on the State Register of Historic Places or are significant in the history, archeology, architecture, or culture of Canton as determined by the Somerset Historical Commission. CPA funds may be used for the acquisition, preservation, restoration or rehabilitation of historic resources (including Town-owned historic resources), but not for routine maintenance. Unless such historic resources are in public ownership, the public purpose of investments in historic resources must be apparent, and/or must be protected by a preservation restriction that ensures a public benefit. All projects funded in the Historic Resources category must meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Currently, Somerset has a considerable number of historic assets, including municipal buildings, private homes, and ancient artifacts. These resources offer residents and visitors opportunities to learn about their heritage and the history of the town and nation. Several of Somerset's most important resources, such as its stone walls dating back to 1680 and its ancient cemeteries, have no form of recognition or protection. Recognition and protection of the town's historic resources can help preserve Somerset's unique character for future generations and can serve as an educational resource for its residents. An inventory of the town's historic resources was completed in 1986; however, it is now dated and in need of a more comprehensive analysis. Somerset does not have a town-wide Historic Preservation plan. However, Somerset is subject to a town bylaw which creates a demolition delay procedure for structures seventy-five years old or more. Somerset has an appointed Historical Commission and an active Historical Society. Both organizations focus on educating the public about Somerset's history.

Historic Resources and Needs

Somerset is a New England town with a rich historical background. English colonists settled the town in 1680, and it can claim to be one of the oldest communities in the United States. Somerset has historic churches, residences, and municipal buildings that contribute to its character and charm. Somerset has two sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places: One is the Swansea Friends Meetinghouse located on Prospect Street. This structure was built in 1701 and placed on the National Register in 2014. Also included on the National Register is the Borden Flats Lighthouse located at the confluence of the Taunton River and Mount Hope Bay. On the state register of historic places are a number of properties and landscape features. Among the most important are: New England Stonewalls (1680); Captain Lee Homestead (1730); Benjamin Bowers House (1740); John Bourne House (1720); Edward Slade

Homestead (1724); Brayton Homestead (1796); Old Town Hall (1873); Fire Barn (1888). In addition to these sites, the Commonwealth recognizes the historic value of approximately 140 other buildings, sites, and landscape features town wide. Many of these have been determined to be eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.

Historic Preservation Goals

- Protect, preserve, enhance, restore and/or rehabilitate historic, cultural, architectural, or archaeological resources of significance, especially those that are threatened.
- Protect, preserve, enhance, restore and/or rehabilitate town-owned properties, features, or resources of historic significance.
- Protect, preserve, enhance, restore and/or rehabilitate the historical function of a property or site.
- Documentation, survey, conservation and restoration of historic structures and sites, including, but not limited to, historic burying grounds, stone walls, stone wharves on the Taunton River, monuments, historic land- and street-scapes and scenic vistas.
- Survey and planning grants for updating the existing inventories and for assisting residents and the Town in securing National Register nominations for historic resources.
- Preservation of historic documents and archival materials including, but not limited to, the Proprietor's Book of the Shawomet Purchase (1677) and the 18th, 19th, century maps of the town and its individual neighborhoods.
- Support projects that highlight Somerset's historical resources and design these projects to be accessible to the greatest possible audience, particularly schools and community groups.

Possible Historic Resource Projects

Examples of the types of the historic resource projects that may be carried out under the CPA:

- ✦ Acquire a historic site or landscape
- ✦ Provide a match for federal or state grants such as the Massachusetts preservation project fund
- ✦ Purchase a preservation easement to protect facade or other historical features
- ✦ Restore historic buildings to reverse inappropriate alterations
- ✦ Establish or expand signage on markers at historic sites
- ✦ Conduct historical or archeological surveys necessary for a preservation project or creation of a new historic district
- ✦ Provide grants to historic consultants to perform studies incident to filing applications with the Massachusetts Historical Commission for nomination of historic resources for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

- ⤴ Restore archival documents
- ⤴ Provide grants to acquire or preserve a historic property and private nonprofit ownership provided that city acquires a preservation restriction to protect the public's investment
- ⤴ Rehabilitation and restoration
- ⤴ Restore or upgrade municipal historic resources such as Town halls, libraries, town commons, parks, or cemeteries
- ⤴ Adaptively reuse historic sites such as the upgrades of rehabilitation of firehouses, churches, town halls, or schools.
- ⤴ Capital improvements to historic resources that are necessary to comply with state building codes
- ⤴ Provide new utilities and other site work necessary for a preservation project
- ⤴ Mitigate environmental contamination at historic sites

Please note: For a proposed historic preservation project to be eligible for CPA funding (other than one involving the Quaker Meetinghouse), the Somerset Historical Commission ("Commission") must make a determination that the historic resource which is the subject of the application is locally significant. Please contact the Commission for details as to how to apply for such determination. Somerset Historical Commission, Town Office Building, 140 Wood Street, Somerset, Massachusetts 02726 (Telephone: (508) 717-7021). The Committee will not accept an application unless a Certificate from the Commission indicating that it has made such determination is attached.

***Town of Somerset
Community Preservation Plan
Open Space***

Resources and Needs

Somerset is unique amongst the towns in southeastern Massachusetts. At 8.11 square miles, with a long, narrow profile, it is somewhat constrained by its geography in terms of open space planning possibilities. Somerset is also the most densely populated town in the SRPEDD region (and one of the most densely populated towns in the state). According to the 2010 U.S. Census, 18,165 residents, or approximately 2,000 per square mile, occupy Somerset. (The 2014 Town Census found 17,931 residents in Somerset.)

Somerset is also unique in that between 1980 and 2000, the overall population has decreased by approximately 600, putting Somerset alone amongst towns in the SRPEDD region in experiencing a net population loss over the last 20 years (it should be noted that the population did increase from 1990 to 2000 by approximately 3%). Somerset has also seen its median age increase from 31 years in 1970, to 43 years in 2000 (the state median is approximately 36.7 years). The town has become older, an important factor to consider in open space planning.

Notwithstanding these challenges Somerset has made substantial strides in addressing its open space resources. The Town has managed to accomplish a great deal through foresight and partnerships, particularly amongst its municipal departments. The ability of the Conservation departments to obtain grants and promote volunteerism, along with the Public Works staff ability to address the physical needs of various town properties, has led to acquisitions and facilities improvements such as:

- Established a Land Acquisition Fund and Land Acquisition Committee with the proceeds from the sale of municipal land
- Repairs to the Angus Street Stairs in order to maintain safe coastal access
- Implementation of erosion control measures at Mallard Point
- Construction of a new bridge at Chace Preserve
- New landscaping at Waterfront Park
- Creation of the park and waterfront access on Ripley Street
- The creation of the Broad Cove Boardwalk Plan
- The acquisition of 120+ acres of land from PG&E, done primarily with the Town's dedicated Land Acquisition Fund

- Worked with federal and state agencies to secure the development of public park land and access to and from the base of the new Brightman Street Bridge.

The open space goals of the Town are as follows:

- Protecting the quality and quantity of Somerset's water resources — Somerset's 14.7 miles of coastline are one of its greatest recreation/quality of life assets. With the interior of the town largely developed and the geographic constraints inherent to its boundaries, maintaining existing coastal access and developing new opportunities will be a key recreational necessity both locally and regionally. Likewise, maintaining the quality of the rivers and streams flowing into the Taunton River is important to environmental health and safety.

Protecting the public water supply reservoir and the resources that feed it is also a major concern. Adequate buffers and up-to-date bylaws, rules and regulations must address water supply concerns.

Preventing the loss of the remaining rural, cultural and historical qualities and resources of the town — Somerset's historical resources have been extremely well catalogued and chronicled over the years. Establishing historic register districts and landmark areas should be pursued. Charettes addressing rehabilitation and revitalization projects in the downtown area, (like Main Street project), has been permitted and is waiting a start date. Where limited open space opportunities exist, the town should explore developing connections between key municipal open space parcels and culturally and historically significant areas (knitting together of green space through available tools such as conservation restrictions, easements or set-asides in partnership with private land owners).

- Improve and expand passive and active outdoor recreational opportunities for all of the residents of Somerset — Aside from using the tools described above, the town has three major opportunities to address this goal through federal, state and local partnerships.

The public park land at the footing of the new Brightman Street Bridge will provide an excellent opportunity to expand public access to the waterfront and provide walking, biking, fishing and other activities. The town can also provide links to nearby municipal properties, such as the new PG&E land, O'Neil Field and South Field with dedicated bikeways along connector streets. Read Street could also provide a regional connection to the new Swansea bike lanes.

The development of a boardwalk on Broad Cove on existing conservation land is also in the planning stages. This area would provide opportunities for nature observation, walking, etc. The town could also establish a link to the Swansea bike lanes along Elm Street.

The Taunton River has been designated a Federal Wild and Scenic River. This program is funded by the Department of the Interior's National Parks Service. This designation will help Somerset promote its coastal resources, address its environmental challenges and address its resource and conservation needs within the Taunton River corridor.

- Promote coordinated, responsible land use management and planning —
The town should pursue review and necessary revisions to the existing planning board rules and regulations (movements and development patterns and potential impacts). This could also provide future savings to the town in terms of data acquisition and out-sourcing of planning studies requiring GIS services (mapping, design, etc.).

***Town of Somerset
Community Preservation Plan
Recreation***

Recreation Resources and Needs

The Recreation and Playground Commission provides a wide variety of active and passive recreational for all its residents of all ages which exudes a healthy, fun, and educational programming on its athletic fields, playgrounds, and special events. The Recreation and Playground Commission with the assistance of the Highway Department oversees the management of eight playgrounds and mixed use facilities. The primary facilities are O'Neil Field, South Field Complex, Ashton Field, and the Pierce Beach & Playground. The remainder of the facilities used is smaller "pocket" neighborhood facilities that include the Lahey Ave. Playground, Hillside Ave. Playground, Village School Playground, and Pottersville Field. The O'Neil Field and the basketball courts at Pottersville Field are the only recreational facilities in use that have outdoor lighting.

The primary facilities have been developed into sites that are used for town related programming and to youth organizations for their play and extended programming. The main facility in Somerset is the Pierce Beach & Playground, affectionately known as the "Home of the Big Red Slide". It has a small beach, with two playground dedicated to different age groups, basketball court, beach volleyball court, bandstand for concerts, and picnic area for rentals. It also has a combination baseball/softball field used by the Somerset Baseball organization for instruction and league play. The facility is also the main site for various road races and special events.

Most of the facilities in Somerset are past their prime and may not be up to industry standards but do provide excellent opportunities for its residents to enjoy playground amenities, ball fields for athletic contests, and even open play areas. Some of these facilities need to be updated to meet handicapped accessibility. Even though Somerset has several facilities for athletic play and programs, it needs a permanent facility for all types of recreation – both active and passive. The Commission believes the Town should consider surveying these needs by determining the support for multiple recreational programming, present a breakdown of its facility users, and continue to bolster the range of opportunities to Somerset residents of all ages.

The Town's permanently protected open space includes a network of trails that provide opportunities for passive recreation, such as hiking, cross-country skiing, and access to ponds, as well as bicycling. Other resources include public playgrounds and recreational facilities such as the skate park and basketball and tennis courts.

The need for additional recreation facilities has increased as activities have grown to include younger participants and senior adults, gender equity issues, longer or multiple seasons, and a greater number and variety of new sports and activities. A five member Recreation Committee is elected by the voters of the Town. It meets monthly with the Town Recreation Department and the Recreation Director to review and plan for both short- and long-term solutions in response to these needs.

The Board of Park Commissioners have supervision of the Town's parks. They are: Village Waterfront Park, Pierce Beach – The Bluff, Buffinton Park, Bicentennial Park (near Slade's Ferry Ave.), World War I Memorial Green, Clarkson Green, Mount Hope Vista Park (end of Ripley Street), and Riverside Avenue Park. What has been said with respect to the facilities under the care of the Recreation and Playground Commission applies equally to the facilities under the care of the Park Commissioners – they are out-of-date and need to be upgraded. The Village Waterfront Park and Buffinton Park, in particular, need new playground equipment. All of the parks could use more benches and more adequate lighting.

Recreation Goals

- Preserve and increase recreational usage and access to Somerset's recreational resources.
- Preserve and protect existing playing fields, especially where new Town building projects may affect adjacent playing fields.
- Provide integration of recreational activities, such as the facilities at Slades Ferry Landing, with other Town Departments.
- Provide a balance of recreational activities (active, passive, structured and unstructured).
- Make maximum use of the scenic areas at Pierce Beach, the Village Waterfront Park and Bicentennial Park, in particular, by constructing gazebos, boardwalks, new piers, bandstands, docks, and footbridges
- Coordinate upgrades to Bicentennial Park with a plan for the use of the area owned by the Town which was part of the Brightman Street Bridge

Recreation Factors for Consideration

Evaluation of projects submitted by Recreation will include consideration of several factors, including but not limited to the following:

- Provide additional athletic fields to meet the needs of the Town's growing demand, possibly through land acquisition.
- Encourage and develop more recreational access/use of open spaces and natural resources (where appropriate).
- Create new resources for hiking, cross-country skiing, bicycling and fishing.
- Extend life and use of all recreational facilities through preservation of existing facilities and resources.
- Develop new active recreational resources including playing fields and playgrounds; with special attention to handicapped accessibility, and adult/senior and toddler recreational needs.
- Provide accessories to park facilities such as water fountains, access to town wells, bicycle and kayak racks.
- Provide security cameras to ensure safe use of the park facilities

TOWN OF SOMERSET

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUNDING GUIDELINES FOR PROJECT SUBMISSION

1. The application process for Community Preservation Funding is twofold. The Application for Community Preservation Eligibility will introduce your proposal to the Committee so that it can determine the project's eligibility and offer guidance. If the Committee agrees that your proposal is eligible, an Application for Community Preservation Funding must be completed. The Committee will review both the application for eligibility and that for funding according to the General Criteria outlined below.
2. In order to be considered for recommendation for the May 2018 Annual Town Meeting, you must submit an Application for Community Preservation Eligibility no later than November 6, 2017. The Committee will make a determination on eligibility on each Application within thirty (30) days after the submission of a complete application. Final Applications for Community Preservation Funding must be received no later than January 8, 2018 to be considered for recommendation at the May 2018 Annual Town Meeting.
3. Each application must be submitted to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) using the Application for Community Preservation Funding/Eligibility as a cover sheet.
4. Applications should be submitted in nine (9) copies of all project materials to the attention of Somerset Community Preservation Committee, Town Hall, 140 Wood Street, Somerset, MA 02726.
5. Please include any maps, diagrams, and/or photos that pertain to your project.
6. All applicants will be expected to be present at a CPC meeting to answer questions about their proposals. The CPC will set a public meeting schedule to review project proposals in January and February 2018. Applicants will be notified regarding the date of the meeting.
7. If approved, project funding would be available after July 1, 2018 following the Annual Town Meeting.

The Somerset Community Preservation Committee will only consider proposals that are eligible for Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding according to the terms of the CPA legislation; specifically, proposals for:

- The acquisition, preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of historic resources.
- The acquisition, creation, and preservation of open space.
- The acquisition, creation, and preservation of land for recreational use.
- The acquisition, creation, preservation, and support of community housing (including items such as annual payments to the housing authority to preserve or expand the affordable housing supply).
- The rehabilitation and restoration of open space, land for recreational use, and community housing that is acquired or created using monies from the fund.

Preference will be given to proposals which meet as many of the following general criteria as possible:

- Are consistent with current planning documents that have received wide scrutiny and input and have been adopted by the town;
- Save resources that would otherwise be threatened;
- Benefit a currently under-served population;
- Either serve more than one CPA purpose (especially in linking open space, recreation and community housing) or demonstrate why serving multiple needs is not feasible;
- Demonstrate practicality and feasibility, and demonstrate that they can be implemented expeditiously and within budget;
- Produce an advantageous cost/benefit value;
- Leverage additional public and/or private funds;
- Preserve or utilize currently owned town assets; and
- Receive endorsement by other municipal boards or departments.

Please note: Except for projects where the Town or any of its departments are the applicant, a Grant Agreement in a form prepared by and acceptable to the Committee must be signed by the Applicant after the project has been approved at Town Meeting but before funds are disbursed.

For further information about the application process or to discuss a project's eligibility, please contact the Committee at the above mailing address.

TOWN OF SOMERSET

APPLICATION FOR COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ELIGIBILITY

Date: _____

Project Title and Location:

Name of Applicant:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

(All communications between the Committee and the Applicant will be through email.)

This application must be filed with the Somerset Community Preservation Committee, Town Offices Building, 140 Wood Street, Somerset, Massachusetts 02726, no later than November 6, 2017.

If your project involves historic preservation, the Somerset Historical Commission (“Commission”) must make a determination that the historic resource which is the subject of your application is locally significant. Please contact the Commission for details as to how to obtain such determination. (Telephone: (508) 717-7021.) A Certificate indicating that the Commission has made such determination must be filed with this application before the Committee will take any action.

CPA Category (circle all that apply):

Open Space
Recreation

Historic Preservation
Community Housing

TOWN OF SOMERSET

APPLICATION FOR COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUNDING

Date: _____

Project Title:

Name of Applicant:

Name of Organization:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

Assuming the Committee has determined the Project eligible, this application must be filed with the Somerset Community Preservation Committee, Town Hall, 140 Wood Street, Somerset, Massachusetts 02726 no later than January 8, 2018.

CPA Category (circle all that apply):

Open Space

Historic Preservation

Recreation

Community Housing

CPA Funding Requested: \$ _____ Total Project Cost: \$ _____

Please attach answers to the following questions. Include supporting materials as necessary.

1. **Project Description:** Please give a detailed project description, including specific objectives.
2. **Goals:** How does this project accomplish the goals of the CPA? (See Guidelines for Project Submission for general criteria)
3. **Timeline:** What is the schedule for project implementation, including a timeline for all critical milestones? Will this be a multi-year project?
4. **Budget:** Please provide a full budget including the following information, as applicable. (NOTE: CPA funds may not be used for maintenance):
 - a. Total amount of the project cost, with itemization of major components.
 - b. Additional funding sources. Please include those that are available, committed, or under consideration.
 - c. Describe the basis for your budget and the sources of information you used.
5. **Support:** Have the appropriate Town Boards and Commissions expressed support and/or approved the project? What is the nature and level of community support for this project?

Please note: Except for projects where the Town or any of its departments is the applicant, a Grant Agreement in a form prepared by and acceptable to the Committee must be signed by the Applicant after the project has been approved at Town Meeting but before funds are disbursed.

Signature of Applicant or Applicant's Authorized Representative

Affordable Housing

“Low income housing”, housing for those persons and families whose annual income is less than 80 per cent of the area-wide median income. The area-wide median income is determined annually by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development for specific regions, including the Boston Metropolitan Area.

“Moderate income housing”, housing for those persons and families whose annual income is less than 100 per cent of the area-wide median income. The area-wide median income is determined annually by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development for specific regions, including the Fall River Metropolitan Area..

“Low or moderate income senior housing”, housing for those persons having reached the age of 60 or over who would qualify for low or moderate income housing.

Community Preservation Act (CPA)

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) (MGL c. 44B) is legislation designed to help communities plan ahead for sustainable growth and raise funds to achieve their goals. CPA allows towns to levy a community-wide property tax surcharge of up to 3 per cent for the purpose of creating a local Community Preservation Fund (CPF) and qualifying for state matching funds. The Fund must be used to acquire and protect open space, preserve historic buildings and landscapes, and create and maintain affordable housing. The state will provide matching funds to communities approving CPA. Somerset accepted the CPA at 1 percent.

Community Preservation Committee (CPC)

A seven-person committee with individual members appointed by the Conservation Commission, Historical Commission, Housing Authority, Planning Board, Recreation Committee, and two at-large members appointed by the Board of Selectmen. The Committee reviews funding applications and makes recommendations to Town Meeting for the appropriation of CPF monies to support approved projects. It consults broadly with town organizations, boards and committees.

Community Preservation Fund (CPF)

A separate town account for the deposit of all surcharges collected and state matching funds. Sub-accounts of CPF (sometimes referred to as “buckets”) have been established to ensure that required shares of the CPF are either spent each year or allocated to the appropriate reserve fund. These are:

- ◆ Open Space Reserve Fund (minimum of 10% annually)
- ◆ Historical Preservation Reserve Fund (minimum of 10% annually)
- ◆ Affordable Housing Reserve Fund (minimum of 10% annually)
- ◆ Annual Reserve Fund (remaining 70% of funds, less administrative costs)
- ◆ Administrative /Operating Fund (up to 5%)

The CPC is permitted to appropriate up to 5% of the funds for administration and operational expenses of the Committee. For example, these funds can be used to hire support staff, purchase office supplies, do mailings and cover the cost of professional services as needed. Any administrative monies not used in a given fiscal year are returned to the CPF annual reserve fund.

Recreation projects are eligible for CPA funding but there is no minimum amount specified by the act,. Beyond these required disbursements, Town Meeting, acting upon the recommendations of the CPC, will decide the allocation of remaining 70 per cent of annual CPA revenues. For example, the CPC could recommend and Town Meeting could allocate the remaining 70 per cent of annual revenue to one purpose, spread it unevenly among all three, or set the funds aside for future spending. These allocations can be changed each year.

Community Preservation Surcharge

The locally raised share of CPA revenue comes from a surcharge (additional amount of tax) on real estate tax bills. Somerset voted a 1 per cent surcharge which is separately stated on each tax bill.

Community Preservation Surcharge Exemptions

Taxpayers currently exempt from real property taxes under Chapter 59 of Massachusetts General Laws are exempt from the CPA surcharge. In addition, Town Meeting approved exemption of the first \$100,000 of taxable value of residential real estate. Exemptions, as well as the surcharge percentage, can be changed at any time with the approval of Town Meeting and subsequent voter referendum.

Historic Resources

“Historic resources”, a building, structure, vessel, real property, document or artifact that is listed or eligible for listing on the state register of historic places or has been determined by the local historical commission to be significant in the history, archeology, architecture or culture of a city or town.

Open Space

Open space shall include, but not be limited to, land to protect existing and future well fields, aquifers and recharge areas, watershed land, agricultural land, grasslands, fields, forest land, fresh and salt water marshes and other wetlands, ocean, river, stream, lake and pond frontage, beaches, dunes and other coastal lands, lands to protect scenic vistas, land for wildlife or nature preserve and land for recreational use.

Preservation

“Preservation” shall mean protection of personal or real property from injury, harm or destruction, but not including maintenance.

Recreational Use

“Recreational use” shall mean active or passive recreational use including, but not limited to, the use of land for community gardens, trails, and noncommercial youth and adult sports, and the use of land as a park, playground or athletic field. “Recreational use” shall not include horse or dog racing or the use of land for a stadium, gymnasium or similar structure.

Rehabilitation

“Rehabilitation” shall mean the remodeling, reconstruction and making of extraordinary repairs to historic resources, open spaces, lands for recreational use and community housing for the purpose of making such historic resources, open spaces, land for recreational use and community housing functional for their intended use, including but not limited to improvements to comply with the American with Disabilities Act and other federal, state or local building or access codes. With respect to historic resources, rehabilitation shall have the additional meaning of work to comply with the Standard for Rehabilitation stated in the United States Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties codified in 36 C.F.R. Part 68.